

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-17, 19-23 and 25-53 are pending herein.

By this Amendment, claim 42 has been amended to correct a typographical error, claim 21 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 24, claim 24 has correspondingly been canceled, claim 29 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of its base claim, claims 26 and 27 have been amended to correspond to the amendment to claim 21, and claims 47-53 have been added.

No new matter is added by this Amendment. Support for the amendments to the claims and the new claims is found in the original specification, original claims, and figures. In particular, support for new claims 47-53 is found in previously presented claims 22-28 and 30.

I. Rejoinder

As discussed in the Amendment filed on September 30, 2003 and as confirmed in discussions with the Examiner, there is no Election of Species Requirement regarding claims 1-15. (See the Response to the Restriction Requirement filed on April 11, 2003.) Also, as indicated on page 3 of the Restriction Requirement, claim 15 is generic. (See paper no. 7.)

Once a claim that is determined to be generic is allowed, all of the claims drawn to species in addition to the elected species which include all the limitations of the generic claim will ordinarily be allowable in view of the allowance of the generic claim, since the additional species will depend thereon or otherwise include all of the limitations thereof. See MPEP §806.04(d)

As claim 15, in the September 30, 2003 Amendment, had been amended to include allowable subject matter, and as the Office Action has failed to reject or otherwise object to claim 15 or claims 16-20 dependent therefrom, Applicant assumes claims 16-20 have been rejoined and claims 15-20 are allowed.

II. Objection to Claim 42

The Office Action objected to claim 42 as having a typographical error. To this end, claim 42 is herein amended as suggested by the Examiner. Applicant submits the requirements of the Patent Office have been met.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are thus respectfully requested.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that claims 1-3, 5-14 and 31-46 are allowed.

Applicant notes with appreciation that claims 24 and 29 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. To this end, Applicant amends claim 21 to include the subject matter of claim 24 and amends claim 29 to include the subject matter of claim 21. Applicant herein further adds new claims 47-53, dependent from claim 29, and incorporating the subject matter of claims 22, 23, 25-28 and 30, respectively.

Thus, Applicant submits that independent claims 21 and 29, as well as depending claims 22, 23, 25-28, 30 and 47-53, are in condition for allowance.

IV. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 21-23, 25-28 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,252,253 (Bao) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,663,573 (Epstein). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, claim 21 is herein amended to contain allowable subject matter. Claims 22, 23, 25-28 and 30 each depend from claim 21 and are thus also allowable. Accordingly, this rejection is now moot.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are thus respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-3, 5-17, 19-23 and 25-53 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


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